CLELAND ISLAND ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

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Approved by:

Date:

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CLELAND ISLAND ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key role of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. **Cleland Island Ecological Reserve is closed to the public to protect nesting seabirds.**

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Cleland Island Ecological Reserve is to protect the habitat of breeding populations of numerous species of seabirds, many of which are rare and endangered. The ecological reserve consists of a single low-lying bedrock island that is encompassed entirely in Vargas Island Park, 14 kilometres west of Tofino off the west coast of Vancouver Island. This small 7.7-hectare island has a great diversity of seabirds relative to its size. It has one of the largest concentrations of Leach's storm-petrels and oystercatchers, the largest puffin colony south of Triangle Island, the largest colony of rhinoceros auklets off the west coast of Vancouver Island, and is an important stop-over point for migrating shorebirds.

The island provides nesting sites for Leach's storm petrel, fork-tailed storm petrel, tufted puffin, rhinoceros auklet, Cassin's auklet, pigeon guillemot, glaucous-winged gull, black oystercatcher, and common murres. The beach logs provide habitat for the clouded salamander. The intertidal zone is significant for oystercatchers and pigeon guillemot as they feed on invertebrates found in great abundance there.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is for research and education. Canadian Wildlife Service regularly undertakes seabird research on the island. Cleland Island Ecological Reserve provides an opportunity to educate visitors to Clayoquot Sound on seabirds, seabird biology and the ecological reserves program on an offsite basis.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Impact of recreation on natural values (recreational use occurs adjacent to the ecological reserve)	➢ Monitor activity around the ecological reserve and ensure seabirds are not being impacted. ➢ Recruit a Volunteer Warden and encourage formal monitoring system. ➢ Work with ecotourism tour companies on appropriate wildlife viewing etiquette and on general awareness of the special values. ➢ Work with appropriate agencies to ensure both marine and air access are controlled, and that aircraft movement over the island is limited.
Lack of public awareness	➢ Ensure there is appropriate signage about the ecological reserve, especially its restricted access status. ➢ Include information about the ecological reserve in interpretive material on the parks in Clayoquot Sound.

	➢ Clearly mark boundaries of Vargas Island Park and the ecological reserve on marine charts.
Lack of knowledge of cultural values	➢ Include in a cultural inventory and traditional use study as part of Vargas Island Park in conjunction with First Nations.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☐	Insignificant contribution to the representation of the Windward Islands Ecosection, which is well represented at 17.4%
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☐	Insignificant contribution to the representation of CWHvh1, which is well represented at 19.3%
Special Features	☒	Seabird colonies with 8 nesting species; rare species
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	*Red-listed:* Brandt's cormorant and common murre. *Blue-listed*:: Tracy's romanzoffia (rare plant); Cassin's auklet; and tufted puffin. *Yellow-listed species of conservation concern (S4):* rhinoceros auklet; Leach's storm petrel; fork-tailed storm petrel, pelagic cormorant; and black oystercatcher.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Breeding seabirds

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☐	Area adjacent to ecological reserve boundary is marketed as a wildlife viewing destination by nature tours
travel corridor	☐	Not Applicable
local recreation	☐	Not Applicable
Special Opportunities	☐	Not Applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Wildlife viewing - offsite

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values unknown
Special Feature	☐	None known at this time

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☒	Important Bird Area (International program that identifies and supports the protection of lands having special bird habitats); part of Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas in Clayoquot Sound and a system of protected areas focused

		on bird breeding areas on the west coast of British Columbia. It is encompassed by Vargas Island Park and it was the first ecological reserve established under the Act in 1971.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☒	Commercial fishery closure specific to the ecological reserve: goose barnacle in intertidal zone surrounding the island
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	Seabirds are vulnerable to recreational use adjacent to the ecological reserve and potential oil spills
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Clayoquot Sound Interim Measures Extension Agreement; Marine Protected Areas Strategy.

Area: 7.7 hectares

Date of establishment: May 4, 1971